

the new north





forward

This is a story of Saskatchewan's north-land.

It is a story of our fish, fur, forest and mineral resources, and the steps that have been taken by the Provincial Government to bring about their orderly and planned development. It is also a story of a people and their problems in organizing for health and education.

The scene takes place in two distinct areas of the north: first, in the forest or "fringe" section closest to southern settlement; and second, in the "far north," the land of great distances and countless lakes stretching to the Northwest Territories.

This hinterland has been southern Saskatchewan's "poor relation"; it is often regarded as cold and barren by those who term Prince Albert the "end of the world." Such is not the case. The north is a land of great potential wealth, a land of beauty, and a land awaiting development. Lack of imagination and poor transportation has hindered its development; poor management and disinterested governments have, in a large measure, been responsible for allowing private interests, concerned primarily with short-term benefits, to wastefully

deplete that which has already been penetrated.

In the north there are people who must be given security. Past policies have threatened their security and seriously affected their ability to produce on a long-term basis.

Under a new administration and a new policy the north is being rejuvenated and placed on a sound economic basis. In developing the human and material resources the Government has put into effect three fundamental policies:

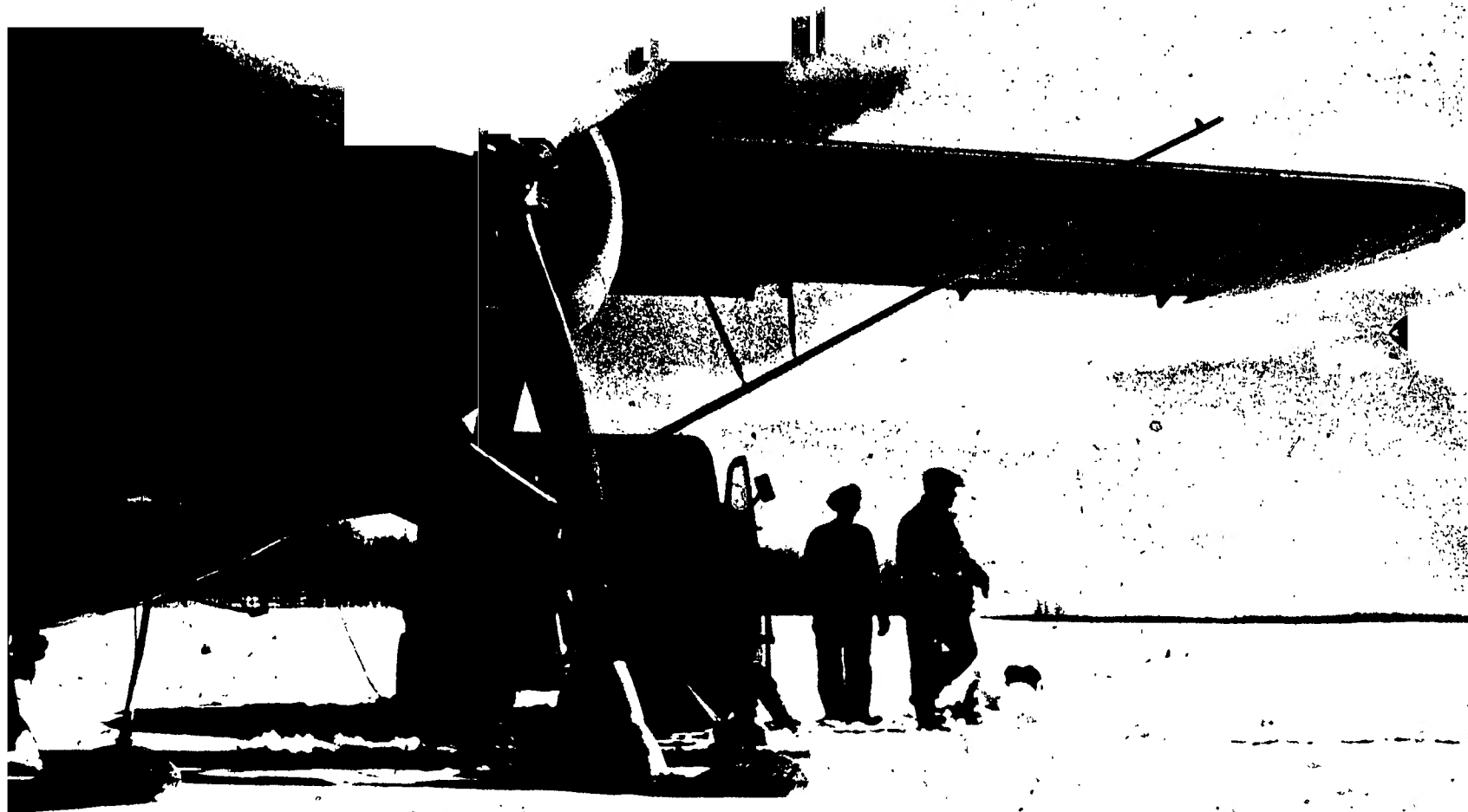
First, the reorganization of the fish, fur and timber industries to place them on a "sustained yield" basis through orderly development and planned production.

Second, the formation of marketing boards for the fish, fur and timber industries to stabilize northern economy and guarantee the highest possible return.

Third, the rejuvenation of social and economic life through the construction of schools and hospitals and by planned community development.

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the northern fringe

The first part of our story takes place in what is known as the "fringe" or "wooded" section of Northern Saskatchewan.

It is an area extending northwards from a line drawn roughly across the province from the Kamsack region, near the Manitoba boundary, to Prince Albert in the centre, and then angling north and west to a point south of Cold Lake on the Alberta boundary. The fringe is approximately 150 miles in depth, as indicated on the opposite map.

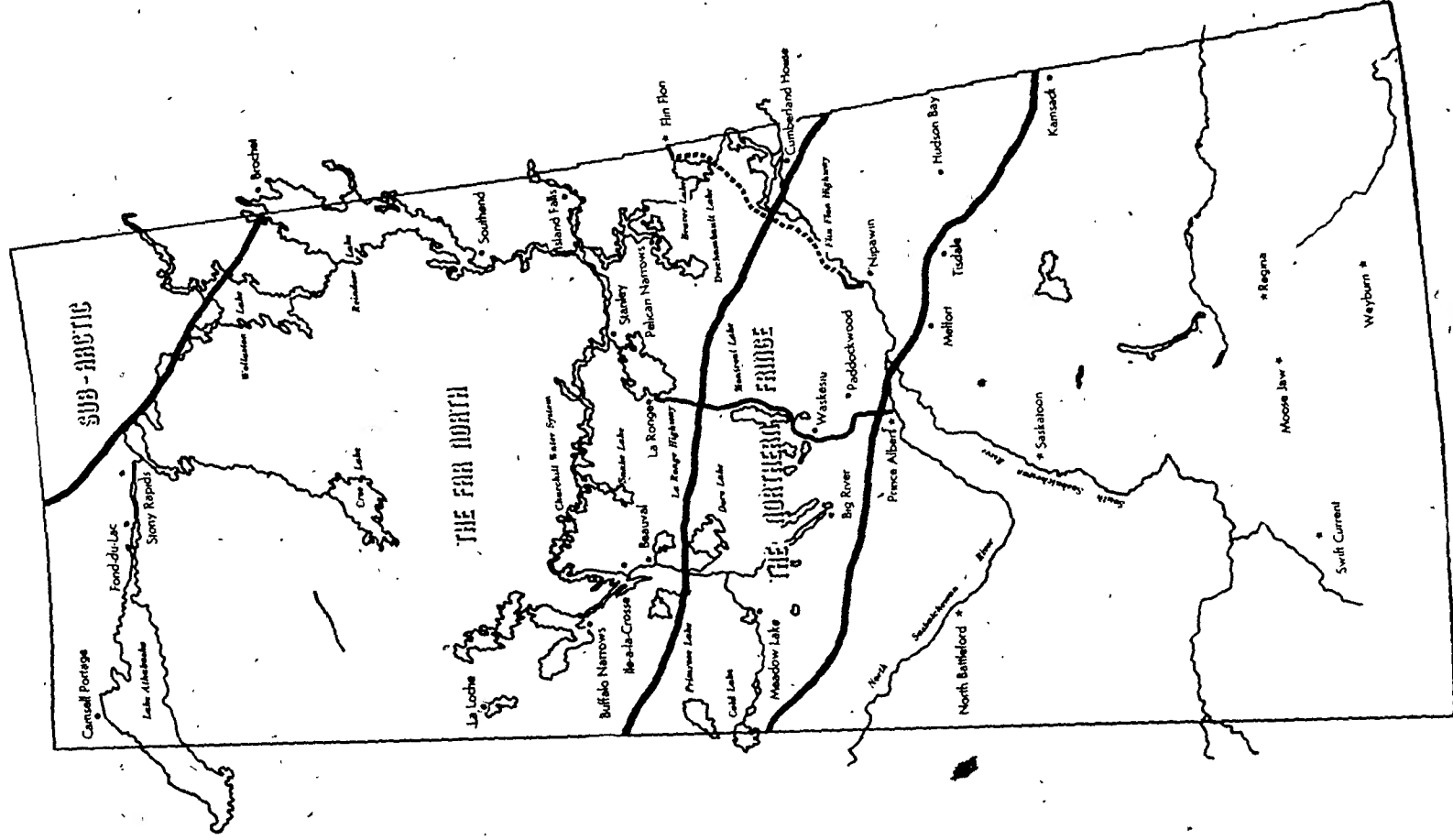
It is covered with such trees as jack-pine, poplar, black spruce, balsam fir and white spruce, the latter being the most valuable commercial timber. In some places its soil is suitable for agricultural purposes. There are a number of smaller lakes, but they are not nearly as numerous as those in the rock formations a little further north.

With the exception of the settled sections, the fringe is principally a timber producer, and the millions of dollars that are drawn annually from the forest industry come from this area. Most residents depend on a number of occupations for their income: some of them work in the lumber camps during the winter, others operate small camps of their own, or haul timber to rail-head; some trap and fish; large numbers of them have small "farms" where agriculture is carried out on a limited basis.

Transportation is not the problem it is in the far north. Although the settler finds communication difficult and is often isolated during the rainy season, his area is usually served by trails or forest development roads. Railroads have been pushed into some areas, such as the Paddockwood and Big River districts, to bring timber to southern centres, but more are required.

Settlement came slowly to Northern Saskatchewan. Fifty years ago the country north of the North Saskatchewan River was considered to be waste land. But during the first decade of the century lumbermen began to pour into the area to draw off the rich timber resources; new forest industries brought development and then the settler and finally the town. Since the end of World War I civilization has been nibbling at the north from its bases at Meadow Lake, Prince Albert, Big River, Nipawin and Hudson Bay. Each successive wave of settlement has pushed the frontiers further north.

This movement is still on the march today. In 1947 the highway was completed from Prince Albert to Lac la Ronge, 180 miles to the north. Another road is being built to link the mining region of Flin Flon to the Nipawin area. Both are shown on the map. Secondary roads and timber development roads are being pushed into virgin forest areas.



depleting the forest

In planning for sound development of the forest resources of the fringe, the first step taken by the Government was the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate every aspect of the industry and its relation to future timber utilization in Northern Saskatchewan. The Commission was formed in 1945, and after two years of thorough research it submitted its report in May, 1947, to the Minister of Natural Resources.

Touching every vital issue such as forest inventory, fire control, reduction of the annual cut on a quota basis, administration and personnel, the report revealed an almost total disregard by private interests for the preservation of the forests, and stressed the need for long-term planning.

The timber industry had been the first to feel the heel of exploitation, being closest to Southern Saskatchewan. When cheap transportation became available, large operators began levelling the forests and turning the rich timber areas into waste land. These operators were not always Saskatchewan people, or the settler on the edge of the forest, but in many cases absentee landlords who controlled vast empires from Eastern Canada and the United States. For prices as low as \$1 per acre former governments gave them large sections, known as

"timber berths," over which they had almost exclusive control.

Few laws ruled these operators. They followed "cut out and get out" practices, moving from one virgin stand to another. But the berth operator was not the only offender; in the early days governments allowed almost unrestricted cutting on Crown land, the land which the people themselves controlled. Those who thought of conservation were ridiculed, as it appeared the timber resources were unlimited.

Until three years ago this ruthless cutting went ahead unchecked. During the Second World War the annual cut was increased to meet war needs, and in 1943-44 alone 169,000,000 F.B.M. of white spruce was taken from Saskatchewan's fringe area by mills similar to the one in this picture. Foresters and the public at large became alarmed; by 1945 it was estimated that there was 500,000,000 F.B.M. of white spruce left, only enough for five or six years of extensive cutting.

The end of the industry would bring poverty to the fringe of Northern Saskatchewan. Industry and operator alike would be ruined. Thousands of people directly or indirectly dependent on the forest would be without work. Lumber for Saskatchewan homes would have to be bought from other provinces.



protecting our heritage

This pressing problem led to the new forestry conservation policy.

The basic program is that the forests should be preserved for future use by putting them on a "sustained yield" basis—that is, using only our "interest" and protecting the "principal."

The first step was the reduction of the annual cut of white spruce. The all-time high of 169,000,000 F.B.M. in 1943-44 has now been cut down, over a period of three years, to approximately 90,000,000 for 1947-48, and there will be a further reduction until the "sustained yield" has been reached. All timber is now harvested on a selective basis, that is, it is cruised and marked before cutting is allowed.

Simultaneously, the Resources Department began reclaiming the timber berths from the private companies. Approximately 160,000 acres have now been bought back. Timber on all Crown lands in the province, with the exception of 151 square miles of berths still held by private operators, and a few areas under special permits, are now under direct public ownership, where effective conservation can be put into effect.

The second step was establishment of a forest management division of the Department of Natural Resources to lay down an over-all program for forestry development.

A "twenty year" plan has been worked out by the division, which divides the fringe into sections, working circles and compartments for planning and administration purposes. At the end of the 20-year period the timber belt will have a regulated annual growth for each year in the future.

In order to determine available timber stands, the division launched an aerial photography program, and the necessary equipment was obtained by the Department. Begun in the winter of 1946, more than 2,300 square miles of forest area have now been photographed by a special camera which is carried in an Anson aircraft. Aerial photography is the most economical and most effective way to locate and accurately estimate timber stands.

Realizing that a forestry conservation program would be impractical without new personnel, the Saskatchewan Forestry School was formed in Prince Albert in July, 1946. This was the third step taken by the Government. First of its kind in the three prairie provinces, the Forestry School gives scientific and practical instruction to future field officers of the Department, and graduates a class capable of handling general natural resources work, as well as forestry. Twenty men, some of them shown on the opposite page, graduated the first year. A second class is now taking a two-year course.



fire control

With trained forestry personnel joining the service, the Government was able to inaugurate new methods of fire prevention, detection and suppression.

Aside from concerted drives to organize settlers, one of the most important steps taken to overcome losses from fire has been the formation of Canada's first "smoke jumping" unit to put out blazes, by means of aircraft and parachutists, before they have an opportunity to spread and destroy vast tracts of land. The scheme had been tried previously in the United States with success. The "smoke jumpers," who were trained last summer, are stationed in Prince Albert during the first season and are quickly flown in a Norseman aircraft to danger points within an hour after a fire has been reported. Eight men, most of them shown in the opposite picture, composed the first fire fighting crew.

The big advantage of the "smoke jumper" is his ability to touch areas where it is impossible to reach by road. It is estimated that thousands of dollars will be saved annually by these streamlined methods.

During the past three years, the entire fire fighting system has been overhauled. Fire suppression committees, formed with the help of local residents, are being set up throughout the fringe and will be ready at a moment's notice; the larger natural

resources districts have been broken down into smaller units to make administration more efficient; new and improved means of radio communication make action more rapid and effective; "standby crews" at central points are another new feature; and light aircraft fly hundreds of hours each spring fire season.

The development road also serves as an important link in the Government's fire control system. Such roads have a dual purpose: they open up new timber areas, previously inaccessible; and they also provide communication for fire fighting crews. Development would be impossible without these roads.

During the past two years approximately 600 miles of new roads and fire guards, as well as many winter trails, have been pushed into the remote areas by the newly formed equipment and construction branch of the Resources Department, which also services tractors, trucks and heavy equipment. The most important of these is the road to Dore Lake, which is opening up an estimated 200,000,000 F.B.M. of virgin white spruce. It is the Government's policy to fully develop all the resources of the north, and these secondary roads—as well as the highways to Flin Flon and La Ronge—are making the vast wealth of minerals, fish, fur and timber, more accessible than ever before.



orderly marketing

While introducing the timber conservation program, the Government made an important decision. It took the stand that if public funds were to be used to develop the forest resources, then the potential wealth being built up should remain in the hands of the people and be used for social purposes.

Implementation of this basic principle of northern development resulted in the formation of the Saskatchewan Timber Board in September, 1945. Now a division of the Saskatchewan Lake and Forest Products Corporation, the Timber Board was set up primarily to assure the orderly marketing of forest products, in a manner similar to the Canadian Wheat Board. For a year the crown corporation operated on a restricted basis, handling only 6,000,000 F.B.M. of white spruce and limited quantities of fuelwood and ties. After the experimental period proved successful, the Government streamlined its timber administration policy.

The old forest policy was such that all timber off crown lands was sold on the "stump" basis to private business, the latter having full control over its marketing. The new policy provides that the cutting of timber is let out on contract to operators who bid for it at the upset price; after signing their contracts, and processing the

product, they deliver it to the Board at rail-head. In this way, the wealth of the forest remains in the hands of the people. The Board handles all timber for re-sale off crown lands, with the exception of fuelwood, fence posts and poles, although the latter are marketed by the organization on a voluntary basis.

The Board benefits the operators in three ways. First, and most important, is the system of orderly marketing, which assures the timberman a constant price throughout the season, irrespective of prevailing market conditions, thereby guaranteeing him security in his operation. Second, it pays a graduated hauling compensation up to \$1 per thousand F.B.M.: as a result the operator has no fear of cutting in remote areas. In addition, the Resources Department reduces dues in remote areas.

On the other hand, Saskatchewan's public receive two benefits from the operation of the Board. First, all surplus is returned to the provincial treasury. Second, the largest percentage of lumber harvested for the government agency is sold and used in Saskatchewan for new homes, a reversal of former procedures which allowed large quantities to be sold in the United States, where returns are higher.



the far north

North of Saskatchewan's timber belt lies the territory known as the "far north." This is the scene for the second part of our story. The "far north" is almost half of the province, and is very sparsely populated except for a few scattered settlements.

Geographically, the far north is much different from the fringe. It is a heavily laked country, much of it set on a solid bed of rock. Like the timber belt, it has its trees, but in most places these are small in size and are not suitable for commercial purposes. Although a veritable paradise for the summer holidayer, its winter weather is a match for only the most experienced northerner. Near the Territories its temperature sometimes drops to as low as 65 degrees below.

It is inaccessible by road, and only by the modern communication such as the airplane, and the motor toboggan on the opposite page, can its boundaries be further explored and its vast wealth in fish, fur and minerals be developed. The northern traveller of 25 years ago penetrated its fascinating interior by canoe in the summer and by dog team in the winter.

Settlements in the north were built up by the fur trade and by a string of Hudson's

Bay posts along the main waterways. As early as 200 years ago such men as Peter Pond and Samuel Hearne travelled across Saskatchewan by the Churchill water system and the Saskatchewan River, in their journeys to Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Along these two waterways and subsidiary systems, the settlements of remote Saskatchewan are located.

Until recently they have remained as the isolated, forgotten areas of 50 years ago.

In this remote half of the province there are approximately 11,000 people, a mixture of Whites, Indians and Metis. Their main livelihood comes from the fishing and fur industries.

The far north has been the most neglected part of the province. It has been almost totally without direction and leadership. Its population, both White and native, has been without the amenities of civilization such as adequate schools and hospitals; the fishing and the fur industries, due to the low prices being paid and the lack of proper conservation policies, have not brought in sufficient returns to guarantee a satisfactory living standard; above all, the northerner has been forced to shift for himself the best way possible.



new air services

The first step towards reorganizing the basic industries of the far north was establishment of an air service for transportation and communication.

Northern development would be impractical without aircraft: some settlements are more than 100 miles apart, journeys of many days by usual northern transportation on land and water. The airplane is the symbol of civilization: it brings science and progress.

The first Resources Department plane was bought in 1945, and at that time was the only Government aircraft in the province. Today the fleet has grown to 14, part of a new crown corporation, the Saskatchewan Government Airways, which was formed in August, 1947. Government planes have flown more than 1,000,000 miles in the past three years. Object of the company is to provide cheap and extended air services to government departments operating in the far north and for private individuals such as trappers and fishermen. Passenger rates have been reduced by approximately 25 per cent over former commercial prices.

When possible, the crown company buys its machines from the Dominion War Assets Corporation, thereby saving taxpayers thousands of dollars. Almost all its planes were bought this way.

Less than a year ago there was only one regular air route operating in the "top half" of the province. Since then, two more have been added to cover every settlement in the north with scheduled passenger runs, thereby saving large sums of money for those who previously were obligated to pay charter rates.

The Government Airways ties together the operations of other crown corporations and departments. Its planes haul fish, bring mercy cases to hospital, transport furs for the Fur Marketing Service, mineral samples for prospectors, and fly school teachers, trappers, fishermen, government officials and tourists and carry equipment and supplies for development projects.

To round out its operation, the Airways maintains an overhaul and repair shop, to service its own aircraft as well as private planes. It also manufactures pneumatic ski pedestals for commercial use.

Prince Albert is the main operational base for the crown corporation, while La Ronge, 180 miles to the north, is a secondary one. Its planes are equipped with floats in the summer and skis in the winter. All surplus derived is ploughed back into the north or returned to the provincial treasury.



the northern district

Simultaneously, the northern district field and administration staff was organized.

Previously, natural resources administration was centred around the three districts of Meadow Lake, Prince Albert and Hudson Bay, all of them in the northern fringe. The few scattered field officers in the far north were connected to the fringe districts for administration purposes. Classification of the far north in the same category as the southern sections revealed an unrealistic attitude: above all, it produced an inefficient system.

Formation of the northern district in September, 1945, laid the basis for a sound administration, and gave the Resources Department an opportunity to plan for the future. The first step was to increase the field staff by approximately 200 percent: today, almost every area in the north is adequately staffed and served. The field officer's job is to handle fish, fur, minerals, social aid, hospitalization, and generally to help with community improvements and planning.

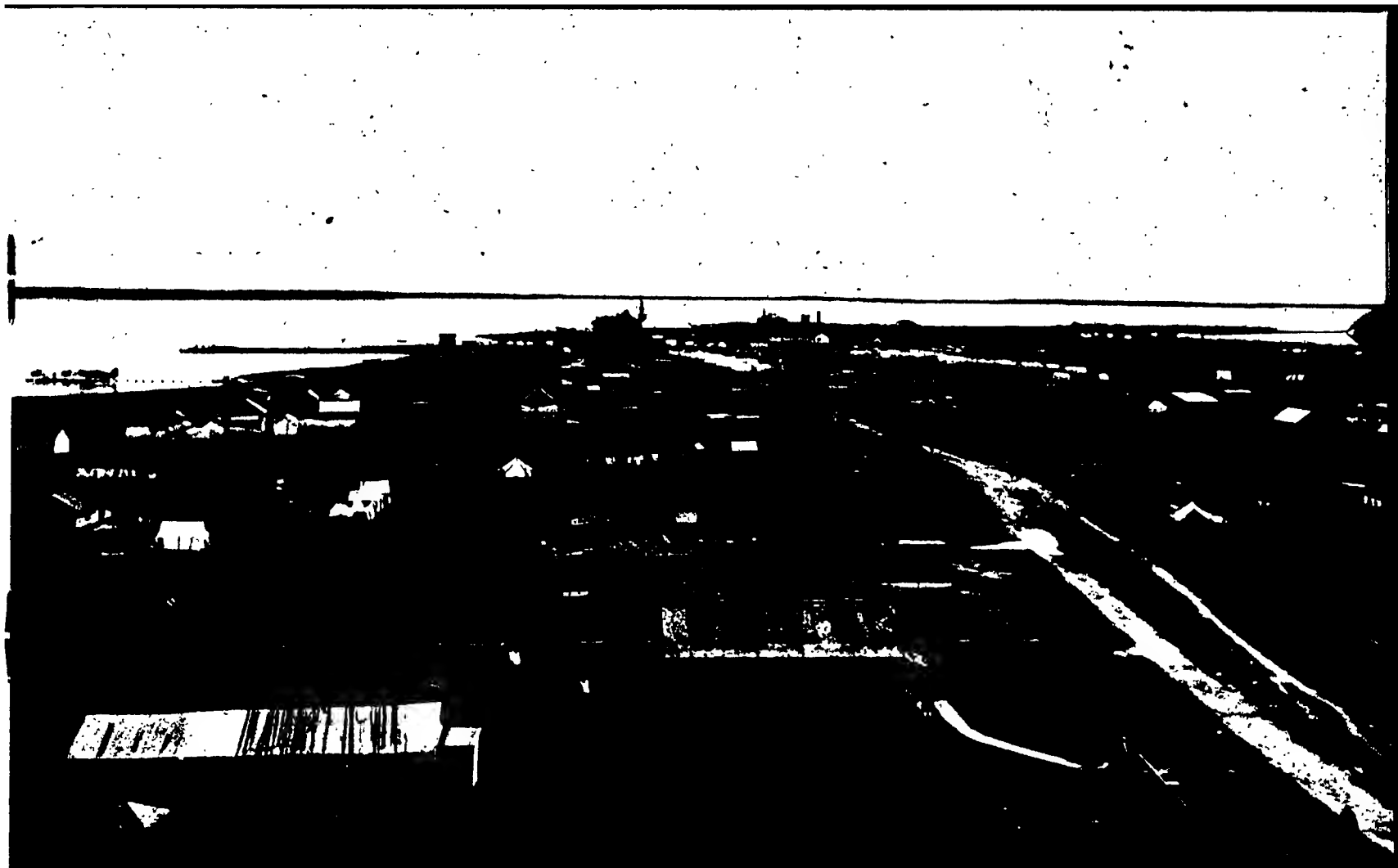
of a Northern Administrator. Stationed in Prince Albert, he co-ordinates the activities of all government departments, such as

A year ago the northern district took another step forward with the appointment

health, education, resources and the crown corporations. Under new arrangements the Northern Administrator has taken over the work of the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Department of Social Welfare. This is another step in the Government's program to provide efficient services: the problem in the far north is unique and can best be solved by one organization.

The Northern Administrator is responsible for all Whites and Metis in the far north, with the exception of the Indians, who are a Dominion responsibility. The first two groups number about 6,000. By assisting these people, the Government is helping to build up the isolated communities, like Ile-a-la-Crosse, shown on the opposite page, and to place their economies on a more stable basis.

Aside from the ordinary administration of the resources, the northern district sets up sawmills in certain communities, operates special projects, launches works programs, lays out townsites for planned community development and undertakes educational campaigns. One settlement where organized development has taken place under this system is Cumberland House, the scene of a government farm to stabilize an economy too dependent on the fur industry at the present time.



planning fur output

With a new air service, and efficient administration, the Government then proceeded with its over-all program to reorganize the industries of the far north.

Fur was first on the schedule: it is basic to the livelihood of every northern resident.

Like the forests in the fringe area, the fur industry was the victim of neglect and exploitation. Trapping was allowed on an almost unrestricted scale, depleting the stocks of beaver and muskrat particularly: the only check was an open and closed season, but when the latter was enforced many trappers, dependent almost solely on the industry for a living, had no means of livelihood. In addition, trappers like these on the opposite page, found their trap lines pilfered by poachers who came from outside areas during the best seasons. This "feast and famine" policy led to the impoverishment of the trapper.

In 1945 the Province began to organize crown lands north of latitude 53 into conservation blocks, with the aid of the Dominion Government, which is paying 60 percent of the costs as its share for the Indians. Seventy blocks have been set up by majority vote of the trappers in each area, and five-man councils, elected democratically by the trappers themselves, are in charge of each. Only residents are allowed to trap in the

blocks, and each man has an exclusive trapping area for highland fur such as fox and mink.

Definite quotas are placed on beaver and muskrat, and these are trapped on a community basis, the number for each person depending on the supply. Sufficient stock is always left for propagation purposes, thereby guaranteeing the trapper a steady and gradually increasing income. Indians are treated on an equal basis with others, for the first time in the history of the province, enjoying all the privileges and assuming the same responsibilities.

No royalties are charged on beaver and muskrat, but the Government takes 10 percent to help pay for the costs of the scheme. Where special projects are under way, such as dams and other improvements, 20 percent is taken. A similar conservation scheme is under way in the settled areas of Saskatchewan.

The Resources Department is making two other valuable contributions to the industry. The first is the transplanting of live beaver from southern areas to northern lakes to build up the population. In the past two years, 1,125 have been transplanted. The second is the organization of a fur farm division to provide education and vaccine services to the 600 fur farms in the province, a number of which are located in the north.



fur marketing service

While reorganizing the productive capacity of the fur industry, the Government was determined to eliminate exploitation of the trapper.

For years, northern trappers had been the victims of free traders who often paid the lowest possible prices for pelts. Residents of the far north were constantly in debt; often their pelts were improperly graded, giving them even a smaller return.

To alleviate these conditions, the Government formed the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service, to market all types of fur. At first formed under the Department of Natural Resources in 1944, it was organized into a crown corporation a year later. Furs are shipped from all parts of the province to the agency's building in Regina, where they are graded and classified by experts. Then regular auction sales are held throughout the year, with buyers from eastern Canada and the United States bidding on the pelts. In handling furs, the agency pays an initial payment to the trapper, the remaining sum being dispatched as quickly as possible after sale.

The Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service does not buy fur from the trapper. It is simply a producer's marketing agency: at all times the fur remains the property

of the trapper until sold. The Service is an extension of the Government's program of the orderly marketing of natural resources, and is aimed at obtaining the highest possible price for the producer. Its aim has never been to market furs at a profit for itself; only a small fee, five percent, is deducted for operating expenses. The small surplus made by the Service is used in the same manner as the earnings of other publicly-owned enterprises: first, to strengthen the industry itself, and second, to increase the social services available to Saskatchewan people.

Indicative of the strong financial position of the Fur Marketing Service, and the continued support received from fur men in the province, is the dollar value of each year's sales: 1944-45, \$526,000; 1945-46, \$1,350,000; and 1946-47, \$1,150,000. Last year's decline was due to a falling off in market prices, and not decreased volume. Had the prices held the sum would have reached \$1,500,000.

The agency handles all beaver and muskrat in the province. This is being done because the Government feels that its quotas in the fur conservation program could not be regulated effectively otherwise. Highland fur also passes through the Service in large volume, but it is handled strictly on a voluntary basis.



saving our fish resources



Next came reorganization of the fisheries, the industry ranking second in importance to northern residents.

Before formation of the northern district the fishing industry, like the fur industry, was left to shift for itself. Few people were interested in developing and conserving the fish resources for future generations. Lake limits were set haphazardly without the aid of science; general fisheries regulations were enforced half-heartedly; poor quality products were responsible for a lack of confidence in the province's export market; and the fish buyers were allowed to exploit the fisherman.

Approximately 10,000,000 pounds of fish, mostly whitefish, pickerel and trout, valued at \$1,000,000 annually, are taken from Saskatchewan lakes. An industry of this size and importance deserves special attention.

In establishing the industry on a firm foundation, the Department of Natural Resources has put into effect four main policies, based on the findings of the Royal Commission on Fisheries set up in 1946:

1. Effective administration of the fisheries through a reorganized office and field staff to give sufficient coverage to the northern half of the Province, where 95 per cent of the operation is conducted.

2. Lake management — the scientific regulation of lakes to put them on a "sustained yield" basis—which will place fish production on a scientific level. For the first time, biologists have been employed to study fish habits and diseases, to conduct field experiments, and to advise what lakes should be fished and in what way. The aim is to have the highest possible production over an extended period without endangering the productivity of the lake.

3. Improvement in the quality of fish products, to put Saskatchewan fish among the best in Canada. Markets are being preserved through strict grading and inspection. The old practices of unsanitary conditions, improper handling and processing are being eliminated.

4. Intensive research, with the aid of Dominion and university biologists, to find suitable ways of utilizing all fish and waste products. Production of fish oil and fish meal are two projects being undertaken. Through such research work it is hoped to provide larger incomes for the fishermen, and to make commercial fishing more economical for all concerned.

Through scientific planning and the efforts of Saskatchewan's fishermen, the industry is being placed on a sound, long-term, stable yield basis.



new deal for fishermen

To strengthen the new fisheries policy the Government formed the Saskatchewan Fish Board in 1945 to market fish for the fishermen.

An amalgamation of the earlier Saskatchewan Fish Products and the Saskatchewan Fish Marketing Board, it seeks to give the producer the highest possible return for the product he produces. Like its sister organizations, the Saskatchewan Timber Board and the Fur Marketing Service, it is introducing a system of orderly marketing of natural products. The Fish Board was formed following a request from many fishermen and a survey by the Department of Natural Resources to learn what the majority of the fishermen desired.

The results of the survey revealed that low returns and the constant fluctuations of prices paid by the dealers made an economical operation difficult.

Conditions like these produced the Saskatchewan Fish Board. After two years of growth it operates mainly at Wollaston Lake, near the Northwest Territories, and within a 75-mile radius area of Meadow Lake, Lac la Ronge and Beaver Lake, where cold storage plants and filleting units are located. However, it will handle fish wherever a request is received. In 1947-48 it expects to handle about 5,000,000 pounds of

fish, almost three-quarters of the province's estimated production.

All fishermen in the Fish Board areas deliver their products to Government plants, or leave it at stations for pickup. Fresh fish is rushed to central points by snowmobiles, like this one, and then it is transferred to airplanes. The fish is processed when necessary, and later marketed. Most Saskatchewan fish is exported to the United States, where the best market has existed, but educational campaigns now under way aim at increasing sales on the home market.

The Fish Board benefits fishermen in two important ways:

First, it aims to establish a set price for fish at the beginning of each season, and even if the market experiences a drop during the year, the fisherman will continue to receive this price. This is a marked improvement from the past when the producer received different prices on different lakes.

Second, the Government filleting plants, all set up within the past three years, make fishing possible on certain lakes which would normally be closed due to Federal Government regulations laid down in 1944. These lakes are classified as "B," and all whitefish from them must be filleted and candled.

To improve the quality of Saskatchewan fish, the Government agency has carried out experiments in smoking and canning fish.



mineral policy

After the fish and fur industries, which are the lifeblood of the far north, comes mineral development. Although a greater revenue producer than both combined, it is not at present basic to the welfare of northern people: mining enterprise is principally concentrated in the rich Flin Flon area.

But it too is receiving special consideration under new and vigorous guidance from the Department of Natural Resources. It is hoped that mining may eventually be developed to such an extent that it will help round out and stabilize the present northern economy.

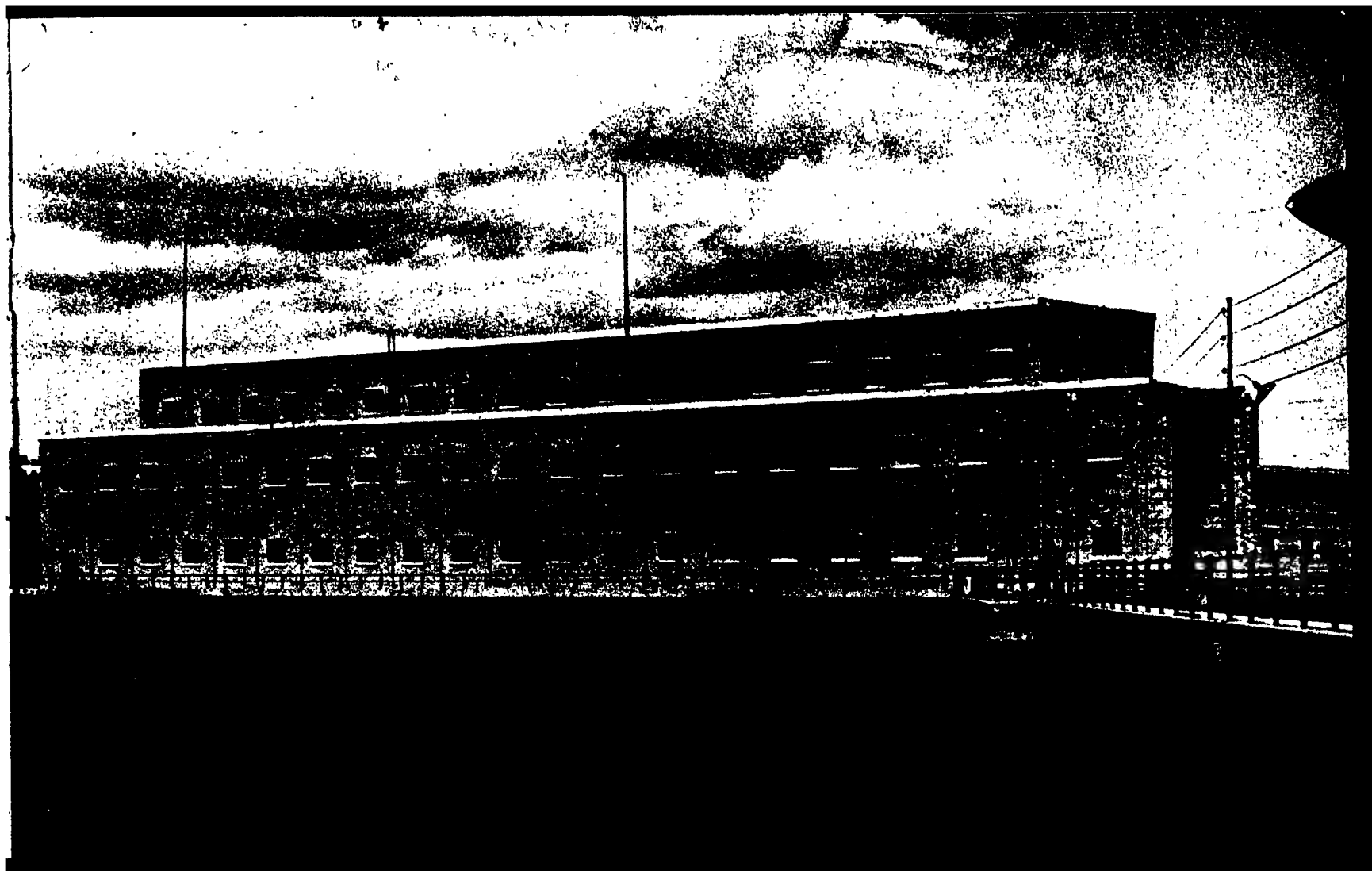
Indicative of the government's intention to develop the mineral resources of the north is the appointment of a director of mineral resources to investigate new finds, and co-ordinate the activities of prospectors and mining companies. Surveys show that the coniferous area of the north is rich in gold, pitch blend, copper and zinc, and with a forthright policy extensive development is believed practical. The power house of the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company at Island Falls, which is shown opposite, is an example of development that might occur in other areas.

The Government has inaugurated two basic policies.

The first concerns new undertakings. The Government is prepared to grant full protection to exploration interests in return for stipulated expenditures and development work; this will be done in the form of signed contracts with new firms and ones already in operation. To encourage new firms which have been established since January, 1947, special consideration, in the form of a sliding royalty scale determined from the actual profits made, will be given.

In addition, free transportation into the northern areas will be provided by the Saskatchewan Government Airways, and cash awards will be given those making new discoveries. Geologists and trained technicians are available to assist interested parties.

The second basic policy concerns royalties. The Government believes that the mineral resources of the province belong to the people as a whole, and should not be exploited by a few individuals. It has, therefore, renegotiated royalty contracts with a view to obtaining larger revenues for the provincial treasury. For example, royalties paid by the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company, Flin Flon, have increased from \$178,808 in 1944 to an estimated \$1,230,000 in 1946. Royalties now depend on the amount of profit made by the firm.



fine schools

The education program has also been speeded up with the construction of new schools and teacherages. One reason for the backwardness of the north has been the neglect of its human as well as its material resources; the Government is striving to provide everyone, children and adults alike, with a good education so they may play their part in the new development.

Like the fish, fur and timber industries, conditions in the field of education were found deplorable. A survey made in 1944 showed that less than half of the children between the ages of six and fifteen were attending school. Eighteen settlements had no school, several schools were conducted in temporary and unsuitable quarters, and teachers were so difficult to obtain that some buildings were without instructors. In certain cases classes were irregular, and in almost all the standard was unnecessarily low. Some children found distance difficulties insurmountable.

Since that time the Department of Education has undertaken a comprehensive program to put education on its feet in the north. The first step was the appointment of an Administrator of Education for that area. In the past three years he has spent more than \$379,000 and constructed 12 new schools and five teacherages. Existing

facilities have been renovated, new equipment bought, and other buildings purchased for teacherages. The number of teachers has been almost doubled, bringing the total to 31.

Almost all White and Metis children are now attending school. They have at their disposal equipment and school buildings which are unequalled in many rural areas of southern Saskatchewan. The unhealthy, rundown school shacks of three years ago are disappearing from the landscape.

Education in the north is aimed at giving an all-round training: children are taught woodcraft, sewing, weaving, mechanics and conservation as well as the "three R's." Boys and girls living far distant from schools, under the Government's assistance plan, are paid \$12 each month to help defray expenses of board and room. The Education Department pays \$100 per school per year to provide noon lunches.

One significant feature of northern education is the Basic English classes which the Government has instituted during the past two years. It believes that northern development depends on the educational standards of the adult, and has given special instructions in adult training to the teachers. Night classes, held twice a week in most settlements, have been extremely successful.



health for all

Health is important too.

No longer are northern residents going without adequate medical advice and care.

Where services were previously at a premium, outpost hospitals, public health nurses and speedy aircraft have been added to serve the dire need of a people long neglected in the march of medical progress.

In 1945 health was in no better condition than education. There were only two fully equipped hospitals, at Ile-a-la-Crosse and Flin Flon, and two nursing outposts, at Cumberland House and Portage la Loche. These points had the task of serving half of the province. All other settlements in the north were completely isolated, and all but one were without even the services of a nurse.

The remote area presented a problem common to itself. Many people there were ignorant of the value of medical services: some women were unaware of the necessary steps to take immediately preceding and after child birth; others knew nothing of the dangers of venereal disease and tuberculosis; and still others were afraid of travelling doctors and nurses who came to their settlement once or twice a year.

This was the problem the Health Department faced in 1945: first, ignorance and fear of medical services; second, almost insurmountable transportation problems.

In planning for northern health, it was decided to build more outpost hospitals, where the services of a trained nurse would be available to the community; it is her job not only to care for the ill, but also to institute preventive medicine and educational programs. The modern, well-equipped city hospital type will not be introduced into remote areas, mainly for financial reasons. Since 1945, the Government has built two new hospitals, at Buffalo Narrows and Stony Rapids and has one under construction at Sandy Beach. More hospitals will be built as the need arises.

The hospitals, like the Stony Rapids one shown here, accommodate the nurse and have adequate space for in-patients. Nurses look after maternity cases, dressings, handle a stock of drugs and, above all, are qualified to decide whether a patient requires aerial transportation to an urban hospital.

Outside the hospital health education is carried on by the nurse and teacher, and where possible, by the field officer of the Department of Natural Resources. The Department of Social Welfare provides cod liver oil for all school children, in 1946 distributing 1,140 gallons.

This year the Hospital Services Plan was extended to cover the northern areas on a voluntary basis.



improved radio network

What communication services are available to crown corporations and departments engaged in northern development? How is efficient administration of the fish, fur and timber industries maintained in such a vast and undeveloped country?

First, and most significant, is the extensive use of the airplane, discussed earlier in this booklet.

Second, is a far-reaching radio network.

An effective and economical radio system is an essential part of northern development: without it northerners would lose daily contact with the outside world. Although the airplane remains as the most important link, it has its shortcomings; the plane cannot maintain daily contact with isolated settlements without great expense.

Previous to 1945, Saskatchewan's northern radio network was small, and for the most part confined to the fringe areas. Its main job was providing communication for timber administration, and it was a division of the forestry branch of the Resources Department. When the northern development program was launched, the need for radio in the far north became apparent.

The first step was to set up the machinery for expansion, and this was done through the formation of the radio branch

in May, 1945, under the Department of Natural Resources. The next step was to service more adequately the fringe areas, and after that the more remote sections. Since then the number of transmitting and receiving sets has increased from 50 to 100, with 20 of these in the far north. Five monitor, or key stations, are in operation at Meadow Lake, Prince Albert and Hudson Bay, Lac la Ronge and Wollaston Lake, just south of the Territories. Another key station is planned for Stony Rapids.

Most aircraft of the Saskatchewan Government Airways are radio equipped. The branch constructs its own radios.

The third new development in north-land communication is specially adapted vehicles for winter use on rough trails and frozen lakes. Snowmobiles, similar to a car but equipped with half-tracks, can reach a speed of 45 miles per hour and carry up to two tons of supplies and passengers. Motor toboggans, made for one or two passengers, are also coming into use, along with snow tractors.

This type of equipment is used mainly by field officers on inspection trips or for light freight. Heavy freight is carried on tractor trains, or "cat swings," when greater distances are involved. In summer the only practical transport is the airplane.



new horizons

What change has there been in the economy of the far north as a result of these recent Government policies?

The first is new community development. Every settlement is showing the signs of progress: there are fish plants, fine schools and hospitals, government buildings, warehouses and new residences. In certain areas sawmills have been brought in by the Resources Department to produce lumber at cost for the people and to provide material for Government projects. The log shacks of the past, so common to northern communities, are gradually being replaced by shiny new buildings.

The second is the improved financial status of most northern citizens. Thousands of dollars have been poured into the north as a result of Government policies, and the average person is much better off today than he was three years ago. Construction programs, increased returns from fish and fur have built up the income of the northerner, allowing him to buy essentials such as fishing equipment and traps, and in many cases to build a new home for his family. Filleting plants employ local labour, the unit at La Ronge, shown opposite, hiring as many as 75 people during the busy season.

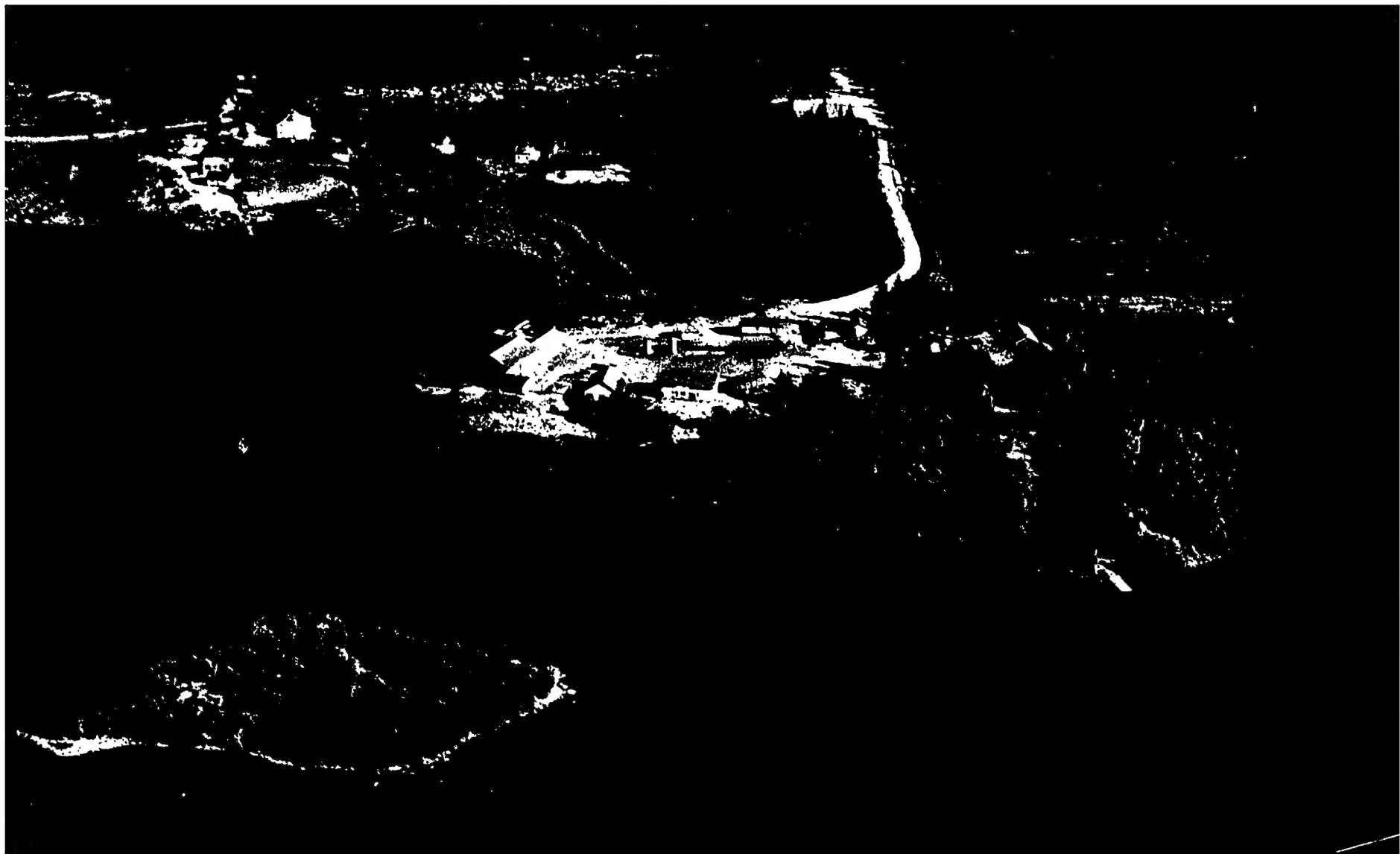
The third is the larger population found in the community. Trappers and fishermen

are moving their families to the site of the new school and hospital, where their children can receive the best attention. The fur conservation plan is partly responsible for this influx, as it is no longer necessary for the trapper to remain on his trap line to protect it from poachers.

The fourth is the healthy and progressive attitude found in the north. People are eagerly flocking to the schools for knowledge and to the hospital for treatment and advice. They come with open minds to Government men seeking advice on conservation measures for fish and fur. They want to learn. They want their community to be the best in the north. In general, there is a feeling of security, a feeling that if harder times should be ahead they will be able to meet them with courage and determination.

What is the future for Northern Saskatchewan?

No one can predict the extent of northern development at the present time: that will be the task for geologists and scientists during the next few years. But one thing is certain: it will be carried out in an orderly, planned fashion. The policies which are now causing a fresh spirit to stir in the "top half" of the province will be continued and will establish a stable, well-managed economy founded on a long-term basis.



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